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During the summer, sixty youth, many of whom were judged to be potential school dropouts, were employed to interview their peers in certain neighborhoods. The purposes of the project were to provide youth with a first-hand view of their own problems, and to have an opportunity to see how interviewing others would affect the interviewers. It was assumed that participation, in and of itself, was sufficient to change certain attitudes and behaviors of the participants. The underlying consideration in the selection of all participating youth would be the possibility of emotional, social and/or economic benefit, and the desire to participate; their ages ranged from 14-18.

The interviewers asked questions of their peers; examples of these questions included, "How do you get along with your family?," "Why do kids get into trouble?," and "How do kids see the roles of people in authority?".

Results of the summer interviews revealed that all the youth who were employed in the survey returned to school; thus the assumption that actual participation helped change the attitudes of the participants was verified.

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HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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YOUTH PROGRESS
REPORT

"TEENAGERS PROBE"

THE PROVIDENCE YOUTH INTERVIEWERS PROJECT

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"TEENAGERS PROBE"

THE PROVIDENCE YOUTH INTERVIEWERS PROJECT

Financed by The President's Committee on
Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime

Under P. L. 87-274 Juvenile Delinquency
and Youth Offenses Act of 1961

December 7, 1964

A P P L I C A N T A G E N C Y

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* * * * * * * * *

PROJECT

DIRECT YOUTH PARTICIPATION

During the summer of 1963 the Providence Youth Progress Board conducted a special youth project in the course of which 60 youth, many of whom were judged to be potential school dropouts, were employed to interview their peers in the target area neighborhoods.

This project had a double purpose: 1) To provide Youth Progress with the first-hand view of Providence youth on their own problems; 2) To give Youth Progress staff the opportunity to observe the "Hawthorne effect" (if any) upon the interviewers themselves.

ALL THE YOUTH WHO WERE EMPLOYED RETURNED TO SCHOOL.

The reports which follow include the paper written prior to the project describing plans for it, another written while the project was in process, and a final summary with recommendations for future consideration.

The project was directed by Mr. John McKenna, Supervisor of Special Classes in the Providence Public Schools.

PLANS FOR
DIRECT YOUTH PARTICIPATION
SUMMER, 1963

I. INTRODUCTION

Purposes

The principal objective of this project is to make immediate, direct contact with a group of young people who are representative of the youth population of the various target areas of the inner city. In order to make this contact meaningful for both participants, the youth and the Youth Progress Board, our joint activity is being structured around a program of field interviews throughout the inner city. The interviewers are the youth themselves, while respondents will be their friends and peers located in all the target area neighborhoods.

The research staff has given careful consideration to alternative plans involving less commitment and responsibility than will be necessary for the success of this project. We have come to the conclusion that even in the planning stage, a high level of social and personal investment is fundamental to the initiation and maintenance of projects directed toward genuine contact with the youth community.

Turning now to the basic task objectives of the project, it is intended that:

(1) Interviewers will provide data on the perceptions and images of local institutions which prevail among the various target populations.

PROVIDENCE YOUTH PROGRESS BOARD

(2) Their material will furnish evidence of the level and scope of awareness of existing programs which are available to youth.

(3) This will aid in delineating certain types of youth problems which are not adequately met in the operations of existing programs and/or institutions.

(4) The project will bring about a greater awareness and understanding of the role and function of the Providence Youth Progress Board at a "grassroots" level, i.e., the level of the target area youth.

Assumptions

In line with these stated objectives, we have sought to design a project which will avoid certain major hazards of most "action research" programs. One pitfall we have consistently tried to avoid is the automatic acceptance of a process which begins with "contact" (undefined) and ends with "change" (unmeasured). It is often assumed that contact with an action program means participation; and participation, in and of itself, is sufficient to change certain attitudes and behavior of the participants. Is such an assumption necessarily true?

Through the phases of this project, we hope to measure any discernible change in the attitudes, knowledge, and behavior of the youth interviewers. In particular, we will be on the lookout for changes in their perception of local institutions whose basic responsibilities lie in the areas of education, employment,

and recreation. The crucial problem here will be the interpretation of results which show no significant changes in perception, should such a situation occur. But, at least we will not be assuming the "contact-participation-change" equation with respect to our young staff.

There is further assumption being made about the "data-gathering" process itself. That is, one of the basic factors which affects the process of obtaining information from others is the degree of perceived similarity between interviewer and respondent. From a variety of sources, we know that members of minority or special interest groups tend to communicate more freely with persons with whom they can identify to some degree. This operates particularly among age and sex peers. As was indicated in the HARYOU Report, "Kids will tell other kids things they won't tell adults." (P. 49)

It is exactly this phenomenon that Providence Youth Progress Board is attempting to turn to the advantage of kids in this Junior Staff Program. The focus of such a program is that a Junior Staff can get much closer to what is actually going on among kids in Providence. Providence Youth Progress Board wants to set up programs which are really going to "make a

difference," not present a lot of promises which never materialize. But to have good programs, we have to know what kids really want and how they feel about existing institutions and programs.

With respect to schools, jobs, recreation, and related services, we have to obtain a greater understanding as to the mechanisms by which these prevent and contribute to the delinquent activities of youth in the inner-city area. What is good about these services and facilities; what is bad about them; what kind of changes need to be made -- all these are questions which need to be answered by the kids themselves, not their so-called adult spokesmen.

And finally, our basic premise has been that this direct contact could be meaningful only if there were some "job" which had to be accomplished. It was necessary that all participants be constantly aware of the tangible, concrete tasks at hand. In order to achieve such a goal, the following organization was set up.

II. GENERAL ORGANIZATION

Organizational Chart

It is planned that the program include a total of 50 youth interviewers, the first group of 25 being employed during July, and the second group during August.

Consequently the staff at any one time will total 36 people located in the following areas.

PROVIDENCE
YOUTH PROGRESS BOARD

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
ADMINISTRATION
BUILDING

Director

Floating Team Leader

Secretary

YOUTH BOARD ANNEX	JOHN HOPE SETTLEMENT	FEDERAL HILL HOUSE	BENEFIT STREET REC. CENTER
Team Leader Typist	Team Leader Typist	Team Leader Typist	Team Leader Typist

SOUTH PROVIDENCE	ELMWOOD	WEST-END	OLNEY-VILLE	FEDERAL HILL	SMITH HILL	CAMP STREET	FOX POINT
7	2	4	2	3	3	2	2
Interviewers	Interviewers			Interviewers	Interviewers		

Selection Criteria

The underlying consideration in the selection of all participating youth will be the possibility of emotional, social and/or economic benefit and a desire to participate. In general demographic

PROVIDENCE YOUTH PROGRESS BOARD

terms, our project design calls for a balance of white and non-white youth on the staff, with a sex ratio of two-thirds boys to one-third girls.

More specifically, it is intended that the various types of employees have these characteristics:

Interviewers (25) — The interviewers will not only be representative of the general target areas in which they will operate, but they will also be representative of the sub-groups within a specific target area, i.e., the interviewers will be familiar with and comfortable in the ethnic and cultural setting of their direct contacts. The interviewers will also represent a cross-section in terms of behavior, school and/or community functioning level, and potential, insofar as the degree of deviation from the "norm" is not directly detrimental to the project. The age range for interviewers will be 14-18 -- contingent on the age ranges of the interviewers.

Team Leaders (5) — The team leaders will be generally representative of the target areas for which they are responsible. In addition, the team leaders will reflect an interest, maturity, and capability which will enable them to oversee the interviewing and give form to the reporting of interviews. The age range for team leaders will be 18-21.

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Typists (4) — The typists will be generally representative of the target areas for which they are responsible. They will have sufficient competence to perform their duties in the project, e.g., typing, transcribing from tape recorders. The age range will be 16-21.

Secretary (1) — The secretary will be generally representative of the target areas for which she is responsible. She will have sufficient competence to perform her duties in the project, e.g., typing, transcribing, making out checks. The age range will be 16-21.

III. PROCEDURE

Recruitment Phase — The basic task during the recruitment phase will be to select a representative sample of youth from the target areas who will be hired as interviewers, team leaders, and typists. The focal point of this selection process will be the Providence School Department's Junior Placement Office. This office maintains a file of pertinent information on all young people who have registered in order to obtain employment. The data from their files will be used as one source for obtaining our cross-section of target-area youth.

In addition, recreational, educational, and social workers from each of the target areas will be contacted for their suggestions as to possible candidates for the project. No doubt, a number of youth will hear about the project "through the grapevine," and they too will be included in the list of potential employees.

All candidates will be directed to the centrally located Junior Placement Office for registration and a very general orientation and screening. Each prospective candidate will then be interviewed by the project director for a final decision on selection. After the first 25 are selected, a second waiting list will be compiled for the group to be chosen for the program during August.

It will be necessary during the close of this recruitment phase to provide working papers, insurance, and official identification for all those youth who are finally selected.

Orientation Phase — On July 2 and 3, an orientation and training session for all members of the project team will be held at Providence College. Each orientation and training day will run from 9:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M., with box lunches provided during the noon hour along with a general tour of the campus.

The choice of a college setting for these activities is based on a number of factors. The

principal intention will be to give an initial order and dignity to the project and to impress the Junior Staff with the importance of their roles. It is a relatively common occurrence these days to bring youth, needing inspiration, for a visit to college campuses. But here, we will be going a long step further in that we are bringing them to campus to receive training for a specific program, with the more superficial general tour being only a concomitant.

In the initial portion of the session, we plan to accomplish a number of objectives of a more "socio-emotional" nature. These will be followed by training in the specific skills, techniques, and information which will be necessary for the field work.

Therefore, the first part of the program will be set up so as to give the Director and other members of the Providence Youth Progress Board staff an opportunity to evaluate the project youth prior to any real orientation or training. As was stressed previously, the Junior Staff will be recruited on the basis of their general "representativeness" of the various segments of the youth community. But in order to have some systematic basis for comments about the scope and extent of these differences in attitude and experience, it is important that we have a rough measure of the initial "set" and level of awareness of each individual.

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Included in Appendix A is the set of open-ended questions which are designed to obtain the type of information we will need. Utilizing these as a guide, each interviewer will himself be interviewed by his team leader and these initial conversations recorded on tape. We have two further purposes for making use of this relatively unstructured initial procedure. First, the interview process itself, including questions and tape recording equipment, will serve as part of a post test to measure changes in attitude and information among the Junior Staff at the end of each four-week program.

General information about the project, its procedures and specific skills will be communicated through a variety of techniques. Starting with a discussion of the role and function of the Providence Youth Progress Board, the latter portions of the orientation will focus on the interviewing, reporting, and pay procedures. These will be presented in sessions involving the whole group. Similarly, the duties and responsibilities of each type of job -- interviewer, typists, team leader, secretary, and director -- will be introduced when the entire group is together. But we expect that it will be in the small group bull sessions and through role-playing that the important ideas and procedures will be put across most effectively.

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The training process in general should give the kids a chance to get to know one another and become sensitive to the characteristics of groups other than their own. It will also be an opportunity for the members of the sectional teams to become somewhat acclimated to one another.

Operation Phase

The actual interviewing is planned to begin on July 6. This will be prefaced by team meetings at each of the four area centers. By staggering the timing of these meetings, the project director will be able to get together with each group separately and discuss the specific line of questioning for that week. Schedules for interviewing and reporting will be arranged and further details of the project will be presented where necessary. The project director will attempt to resolve any important problems (scheduling or otherwise) at this point rather than waiting for later in the week.

This type of team meeting will occur at the beginning of every week, just as at the close of every week the project director will hold a summary session with the five team leaders as a group. The Friday discussions will be directed toward comments and criticisms of operations during the previous five days. In between, interviewers will be going out to talk with kids in their areas, returning to home base and reporting to their team leaders (also on a staggered-time basis), and the typists will be transcribing their taped reports.

PROVIDENCE YOUTH PROGRESS BOARD

Summary Session

At the end of each four week period, the entire project team will return to Providence College for a closing session. The program will be focused around an overall evaluation of the project. This will include various types of individual, area team and general group activities.

There will be a final interview of each Junior Staff member by his team leader using the guide questions in Appendix A. Each team will get together to present their criticisms of the project and suggestions as to ways in which it might be improved and/or expanded. There will also be a general group discussion of the meaning and worth of this kind of project for the planning of new youth programs.

At this time, we will also be obtaining further information about the socio-economic background of each Junior Staff member along with his immediate plans and expectations for the coming year. And at the close of this summary session emphasis will be placed on the need for continuing contact between the Youth Progress Board and each of the young people who will have then taken part in this summer project.

IV. EVALUATION

Evaluation of this type of action research project must proceed simultaneously along the two dimensions whose relationship is

in question:

(1) The patterns of behavior of the participants.
(2) The quality of the data being gathered.

This will necessitate, on the one hand, careful interpretation of the impact of the program on the young people who have been directly "involved." We will want to know, for example, whether the dropouts (or potential dropouts) can be encouraged to make concrete plans to return to school as a result of a successful work experience on this project. To what extent will this work experience provide some information and reassurance for the kids who will be looking for full-time jobs in the fall? This is one aspect of our project evaluation.

The other aspect must be an assessment of the substantive material which will be collected in terms of its significance for future programs and shifts of emphasis in various community institutions. Here we will want to answer such questions as:

(1) What seems to be the relative importance of each of these factors thought to be involved in the dropout process -- family background, cultural milieu, teacher-pupil relations, selection mechanisms in curriculum choice, etc.

(2) To what extent do youth have a realistic picture of the job market, particularly the local situation, and how does the level of their information and training relate to the existing and projected job situation.

We do expect that the quality and usefulness of these data will be closely related to the personal "success" of the action dimension of the project. It is hoped that the combined effectiveness of both aspects of the project will be such that the Youth Progress Board might consider a continuation and possible expansion of the project during the coming year.

(4) How do you get along with your family?

a. Who is the boss in the family?
b. Who can you count on for money if you're short?
c. What happens when you get into trouble?
d. Which one of your family do you like the most?
e. Do you go visiting relatives? Which ones?

(5) What are the recreation centers around your neighborhood?

a. Which ones are pretty good? Why?
b. What's the matter with the others?
c. What other kinds of recreation do you think there ought to be around there?
d. Who could run that kind of activity?
e. Do you ever have any trouble at Recreation Areas? What kind of trouble? Who starts it?
f. Then what happens? How does it usually end up?

(6) Why do kids get into trouble?

a. What kind of trouble do they get into?
b. What happens to them?
c. If you get into trouble, who can you count on to help you?
d. Do you know any guys with connections?
e. What are they good for? What can they do for you?

(7) How do kids see the roles of people in authority?

a. What does a recreation leader do?
b. What does a social worker do?
c. What does a teacher do?
d. What does a counselor do?
e. What does an assistant principal do?
f. What does a principal do?
g. What does a policeman do?
h. What does a probation officer do?
i. What does a home visitor do?
j. What does a nurse do?
k. What does a clergyman do?

(8) What is the Youth Progress Board?

DIRECT YOUTH PARTICIPATION

CONTACTUAL PHASE

I. FIRST PHASE

There were no outstanding problems during the first phase of the contactual stage of the youth project. The directly-involved youth made explicit what many of us have held implicitly right along; i.e., target-area youth, given the proper orientation with its concomitants of reason and purposes, can perform in a high-level and meaningful manner.

Certainly, there was necessary a continued ordering and supportive adult supervision during this first phase, but this supervision was gradually lessened as the entire team focused each day more clearly on the Project as it related to each member, his role, and his function.

There was, as would be expected, a distinct difference in the competency of the interviewers. But it was amazing how these differences became less apparent as the Project progressed. This may be attributed to the relatively frequent team meetings during which the what-how-where and when of the Project data was thrashed out in realistic group discussions.

We did lose two interviewers during this phase, both having left reluctantly for better-paying jobs with more hours.

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There was a difference too in the overall competency of the team leaders. It was noted that the team leaders from the South Providence and the Camp-Fox Point-Smith sections seemed to lack the degree of stability present in the other team leaders. But it was the team leaders who apparently lacked a high degree of stability that contributed more to the group sessions by way of their more driving search for reasons, answers, and solutions. And it was the differences in basic approach exhibited by the team leaders that contributed greatly to the meaning of the weekend group sessions. There was an intra-group compensation and balancing which lent itself quite readily to a real learning situation.

Throughout Phase I, all the team leaders generally functioned in a manner reflecting a capability, maturity, and interest that gave marked impetus to the fruition of project goals.

The typists and secretary functioned in a manner that belied their lack of experience, though some exhibited evidence of a lack of formal training in areas where we would normally expect a high degree of competence from business course majors; e.g., organization, grammar, and spelling.

It was fully realized that the data being accumulated from samples of the target population lacked the purity that could be obtained through a tight research design. But as this was not the prime focus of the Project; i.e., pure data from the target population sample, this was not basically detrimental to the Project. This does not mean that there was not a basic honesty to the information, for, at every opportunity, the team addressed the problem of accuracy of data and, consistently, the discussions presented evidence that the Project youth knew the sample target population. Therefore, they knew what was or was not true and they reported it as such.

The most meaningful aspect of Phase I was the weekly group summaries; i.e., by sectional teams and then by team leaders. The team leader summaries were particularly meaningful as they served to tie together each week's work with a surprisingly penetrating analysis of the following:

(1) Accuracy of data.

(2) Method of obtaining.

(3) Meaning of data.

(4) Project personnel - attitudes, changes in attitudes, involvement, understanding.

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The dynamics of these meetings added a further and deeper dimension to the Project's activities in that many basic personal problems were brought to light and discussed with a candor and intensity that certainly led to a growth in understanding and the resultant formulation of quite reasonable plans for solution.

It was also continually inspiring to witness the glow of satisfaction on the faces of team members on pay day, which for some was their first pay day. Their conversation at that time centered around how much to bank - how much to give at home.

As the first phase of the Project came to a close, some questions arose as to the format for the second phase of the contactual stage. It was initially intended that this stage would be divided by having a second set of interviewers hired and oriented to complete the second phase. But, at this point, it seemed that certain benefits would accrue from keeping the same team of interviewers for the entire contactual stage. These benefits were as follows:

The original sectional teams had gradually molded into relatively smooth-working units with a growing awareness of one another's problems, strengths, and limitations. If we were to meaningfully

accomplish the basic task objectives of the Project, it seemed that a group which had grown in awareness and understanding of the Project, the team members, and themselves were more likely to accomplish these objectives.

With our frequent discussions on accuracy, there had been a growing and intensified attention given to this aspect of data provision.

With interviewing experience, there had been growing an interviewer awareness of surface versus casual behavior and response.

A sharper delineation of types of youth problems became highly probable as the interviewers, through their experience, made clearer distinctions in their own minds.

These interviewers had been carrying the "word" on Youth Progress to their neighborhoods. It was felt that we might have introduced an ambivalence to the concepts engendered by a midstream change with its fluctuating roles.

Hurried as the initial selection process was we seemed to have come up with a very representative group. It was highly probable that with a longer training period a majority of this group could develop into quite competent interviewers.

And if we were attempting to assess discernible change in the directly-involved youth, it seemed more readily assessable if we were able to observe said youth over a period of meaningful duration.

It was quite possible that our feelings towards maintaining the original teams were colored by an emotional commitment to the youth that we already knew and were deeply involved with. It was also quite possible that a new team of interviewers with its involvement of more youth and additional interpretations could provide additional benefits.

With the foregoing in mind, it was decided to revise the format of the second phase of the Project.

II. SECOND PHASE

In order to maintain the cohesiveness of the original team and also to involve more youth, additional interpretations, and to satisfy a general commitment to other applicants for the Project, we settled on the following alternative for Phase II.

A new team of interviewers was hired, but the work week was split between the new and the original teams; i.e., the teams worked five-day sequences on an alternate basis (Wednesday - Tuesday).

Team II seemed quite satisfied with this arrangement and Team I was positively reinforced, for, during their discussions in the second phase, it came out that they had felt quite badly about being dropped before the Project was complete.

The orientation for the new interviewers was accomplished at the sectional offices. Through this, it became obvious how important the two-day session at Providence College had been. The new interviewers took much longer than the original team to become imbued with the spirit of the Project and, in fact, never actually reached the fervor of the original team.

Phase II continued, for the most part, not unlike Phase I. The most meaningful aspect continued to be the weekly group summaries; i.e., by sectional teams and then by team leaders. The growth in understanding and planfulness on the part of our Project youth continued to become more apparent.

The outstanding problems in this phase were the loss of a female interviewer from Federal Hill and the team leader from South Providence. The interviewer had been a marginal selection, and she felt that the give and take of the interviewing contacts were too much for her to handle. The team leader got into

some trouble and was referred to court and temporarily held in custody. His status will be clarified in the section on Project Personnel.

The floating team leader was assigned to the South Providence office. The transition was a smooth one as he was from South Providence and he had spent a major portion of his time working out of this office.

If anything, the misfortune seemed to give added zeal to our team leaders with this zeal reflected in the team's effort as a whole.

The data obtained by the two teams was basically similar, with the only real differences being that the original team's information was more detailed, complete, and penetrating.

Data

The following descriptions of the neighborhoods in the inner city are presented to give a focus to the description of the data. They have been excerpted from a Youth Progress Report -- Working Papers, Research and Neighborhood Studies.

South Providence

> South Providence is the area with the highest incidence of every social problem. Unplanned zoning in the past has made this neighborhood one where the encroachment of industry and commerce upon the residential

in the city of Providence. There was a high percentage of home-ownership, and 60% of the housing facilities were equal to or better than the minimum housing code required. Nevertheless, through condemnation and redevelopment for an industrial site, more than 500 Negroes were forced to relocate in other sections of the city. Later, more than 600 Negroes were forced to relocate for the Central-Classical educational compound. Along with the houses, three well-established churches were demolished.

Federal Hill - Olneyville

Federal Hill

Federal Hill received its name from the location of federal troops on its site for the protection of Providence during the Revolution. In the late years of the nineteenth century, it became the chosen location for the newly rich of the city who erected many elaborate houses along its wider streets, many of which are still standing, mostly now divided into apartments. Since the turn-of-the-century era of high immigration from Europe, Federal Hill has been largely populated by Italian immigrants and their descendants. Fifty per cent of the population is still of Italian stock. The neighborhood has long been known for its excellent Italian restaurants at a variety of prices, and many well-to-do residents of other sections of the city go to Federal Hill to obtain superior produce and imported foods.

The neighborhood has suffered great population loss in the past decade, as many of its residents have become prosperous and moved to other areas. The population of Federal Hill dropped from 22,810 in 1950 to 14,692 in 1960. Police records over the years show a high incidence of crime in Federal Hill, and in the

area is particularly aggravated. Successive waves of immigration brought large colonies of Irish and Jews to South Providence. Many of both these groups are still in the neighborhood, but the immigration of the present involves the arrival of large numbers of Negroes. This has been especially true in the last three years since the last census, as Negroes displaced by land clearance for urban renewal and other forms of governmental action have relocated here. Within South Providence, most of the Negroes are concentrated in one census tract, creating a sub-neighborhood within a sub-neighborhood. There is much evidence that these new arrivals are especially susceptible to exploitation by unscrupulous slum-landlords operating in the area. Two housing projects contribute more than their share of problems to the police and other social institutions and agencies and the numerous rooming houses along Pine and Friendship Streets are frequently the homes of the area's many alcoholics. The median income for the neighborhood is $4,036, but 22.9% of the children in South Providence are supported by public assistance. South Providence has by far the largest number of youths in the city, and it is clear that intensive effort and activity is a necessity to the area.

West End and Elmwood

The three census tracts which make up the West-End neighborhood, and the third census tract of the (otherwise middle-class) Elmwood neighborhood border upon South Providence and share most of its social problems. The Codding Court housing project is in West End. The West End has been especially hard hit by redevelopment projects. The area of West Elmwood (census tract 15) outside the "inner-city" border but contiguous to it was also affected by redevelopment which has had an adverse effect upon the West-End area. Prior to 1961, this area contained the one completely integrated community

past the neighborhood had the reputation in the city of being a center of organized crime, ranging from gangland murders to the operation of numerous bookie establishments.

Olneyville

Olneyville is a section which has had a large concentration of Polish stock, and 12% of the population is still Polish. In more recent years, increasing numbers of Italians and Canadian French have moved into the area. The economic situation of Olneyville parallels that of Smith Hill in loss of industry. Three of its largest textile mills have closed in the past year. The plants of these mills are now partially occupied by seasonal industry (such as jewelry) which can offer only insecure employment to local workers. Also parallel to Smith Hill, the Hartford Park housing project located on the borders of Olneyville is really identified with the area. Youth Progress Board observers have noted that the greatest concentration of social problems in the Olneyville area is in the section surrounding the central shopping district and extending to the Hartford housing project. This area may perhaps be defined by the two Junior High Schools attended by Olneyville children. Youth problems abound in Oliver Hazard Perry School and are noticeably fewer at George J. West School in the northern section.

Camp - Fox Point - Smith

The second largest concentration of Providence's Negro population is in the neighborhood of Camp Street, occupying the steep hill from Camp down to North Main. The street received its name from the use of its site as an encampment for the French soldiers of General Rochambeau during the Revolution. Because of its location close to the wealthy East Side

section, Camp Street and its environs have traditionally been the principal source for domestic service. At the present time, although many parts of the area present serious problems, borne out by the social data on them, Camp is considered by Negroes the most desirable section of Providence freely available to them. The majority of Negro professionals who live in Providence live here, and there is a higher percentage of Negro home-ownership than anywhere else in the city. The contiguous Lippitt Hill area, formerly probably the worst rat-infested slum in the city, has been entirely cleared for redevelopment. While to the rest of the city, "East Side" means College Hill and Wayland Square, to Providence Negroes, "East Side" means Camp Street.

Fox Point

The Fox Point neighborhood occupies the area of land situated east of the Providence River adjoining the old docks. It is, in many ways, a pleasant and picturesque place to live. Forty-five per cent of its residents are Portuguese (mostly from the Azores) and old-country grape arbors may be seen in the backyards, a salt breeze blows in from the bay, many eighteenth-century houses of architectural distinction are scattered among the latter tenement houses, and the docks are still active.

The racial status of the Portuguese "brava" is problematical. To white Americans and to Negro Americans, the dark-skinned Portuguese is a Negro. The Portuguese, however, considers himself White, and does not identify himself with Negroes, and is particularly resentful when he encounters racial prejudice against him. Many American Negroes live in Fox Point, and then, in turn, resent the Portuguese because of their "superior" self-concept. Census figures on the non-white

population of Fox Point are undoubtedly misleading as the census taker may be in conflict with the insistence of the dark Portuguese that he is white.

The situation of Fox Point's Portuguese parallels that of the Puerto Ricans in New York. It is less aggravated because this area has been known as a Portuguese neighborhood for many years, and considerable adjustment has taken place. New immigration continues, however, so that while older residents have learned English and become established in the community, new immigrants repeat the old problems. New immigrants come to this country eager to work, and have no difficulty in finding employment although they work for low wages. The biggest problem presented by new immigration is the Portuguese-speaking children who go into the American school with no knowledge of English. Approximately one hundred such children are in the Fox Point school, presenting great difficulty to the well-meaning but perplexed teachers. Most of these children have illiterate parents who will probably never learn English, and after a day of incomprehension at school, come home to speak Portuguese until the next unintelligible school day.

Smith Hill

Smith Hill is dominated visually by the handsome State Capitol Building at its summit and economically by the Brown and Sharpe Company factory at its foot. Since 1872, this company, a manufacturer of machine tools, has been the principal source of jobs for Smith Hill residents. Brown and Sharpe has now constructed a new modern plant outside the city. This imminent relocation is a major threat to the tax structure of the city, and a source of great distress to the local population. The construction of U. S. Highway 95 through the area, (partially

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completed in 1963 and still continuing) with the forced relocation caused by it, has been equally distressing. Youth Progress Board interviewers have found an unusually apathetic attitude among both the youth and businessmen of the neighborhood. They see great changes, but nothing for the better, and feel that the only solution is to move out.

The census figures for this area are somewhat misleading in terms of the Youth Progress Board's plans. Two low-income housing projects with a high percentage of Negro residents are located on the borders of the Smith Hill neighborhood. While these projects are not geographically within the confines of the "inner-city" area, their occupants are expected to share the benefits of programs operating in Smith Hill.

I. NEIGHBORHOOD

South Providence

The South Providence teams reporting on the responses of the youth in their section presented a depressing picture. This was especially true in the center of South Providence. It was generally agreed that, as you got to the fringes of the area, the situation tended to improve somewhat and many of the youth felt that even if they could get close to these fringes, life would have some meaning.

The prevalent feelings were that the greatest percentage of South Providence was a filthy slum area liberally peopled with drunks, drug addicts, bums, and bullies. There were far too

many bar rooms, corner gangs, garbage strewn yards, and rat-infested houses. The vast majority wanted to get out of the neighborhood, but they wondered where they were wanted and what life would be without the support of their friends. A black cloud of despair and frustration seemed to have settled over the area. To most of the youth, there seemed little to do but live for each day grasping what they could by way of thrills and material things. They are torn by the values set up by society and the values they are born into and grow up with in their neighborhood.

Following are some direct quotes from the team as they report for their peers and themselves:

"Some of the kids said the houses are rat-infested and torn down."

"There is a lot of drinking on the street."

"Drunks hang on the corners bumming and bothering the kids for money to buy a drink with in the morning."

"Drunks and people with bad character hang on the corners - some people are afraid to walk the streets."

"They don't want to leave their friends but would like to move."

"They hang around because they don't have jobs."

"It has gone from bad to worse."

"There are gangs hanging around at night to all hours."

".... people in the store who won't wait on you."

".... slum, dirty, poor housing, half-dressed children running around the streets...."

"Everyone would like to move."

Elmwood-West End

The information reported on for the Elmwood youth indicated that there was a mixture of feelings relative to this neighborhood. Most of the youth liked the neighborhood, the people, and the general acceptance of different groups. But there was also present a feeling of inertia; i.e., there was no place to go and nothing to do but hang on corners. The prevalent feeling here was that if some life could be injected into the area, most would be glad to remain.

Direct quotes:

"Since there isn't anything for them to do, most of them hang on corners."

"Recreation only in winter and not for older boys."

"People living there were very nice. No segregation there towards other races."

"They believe they should have some kind of Boys' Club for the older boys."

"Girls feel neglected."

"Some of the kids said they would rather go to school in the summer than have nothing to do."

In the West End, there was more dissatisfaction with the people and the neighborhood in that there was more noise, fights, and disreputable characters. It was also felt that there was nothing for the youth to do here with their leisure time. There was also present an undertone of despair upon viewing the many vacant lots and gaping holes where once there were houses. All were torn by desires to move, but these desires were tempered by the sobering thoughts of where could they go and friends that would be left behind.

Direct quotes:

"No place to go, police bothering people in friendly congregation."

"More than half said they would move."

"People were noisy and they fought a lot."

"Tearing down houses but no sign of anything going up except for the freeways."

"Kids hang on porches."

"The only change was the houses being torn down and the increase of rats."

"They had alcoholics and dope addicts living there."

"No good. People fight and drink and throw bottles out of the windows."

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Olneyville-Federal Hill

The responses from Olneyville reflected a feeling of not too bad, not too good. The neighborhood was described as a mixture of hard-working, decent people with elements that give the neighborhood a bad name. There was also present a feeling of being overcrowded with people, cars, and little kids. And there was the continued complaint of nothing to do for the older youth. Most were willing to stay for they felt the conveniences of stores, schools, and churches were assets.

Direct quotes:

"They said they all hang on corners."

"Too much traffic."

"Kids get in trouble because of idle minds."

"When I asked if they would like to move, the majority said no."

The feelings about Federal Hill were that it was a neighborhood composed of all ages, primarily middle-class Italian, and with a mixture of types; i.e., good, bad, and indifferent. There was a great deal of noise, traffic, and some slums. There was also expressed some hostility because of Negroes moving into the area. It was again felt that there was little specifically for the older youth and, consequently, they spent their time hanging around

on corners and, too often, looking for and finding trouble. The majority wanted to move away from Federal Hill.

Direct quotes:

"They hang there because they haven't anything better to do."

"They said it was pretty noisy at night."

"They didn't like the idea of not being able to do anything except hang on the corners."

"Too crowded and too noisy."

"They said they just don't like Federal Hill."

"All kinds live there from doctors to bookies."

Fox Point-Camp-Smith — The respondents from Fox Point stated that their's was a middle-class neighborhood with many foreigners and some poor housing. They didn't like the neighborhood, but they did like the people and, for this reason, most were content to stay there. Their dissatisfaction was centered mainly on the lack of the leisure-time provision for the older youth. Again, we have the picture of youth hanging on corners and periodically being dispersed by police with a resultant growth of resentment toward authority.

Direct quotes:

"They all complain, but they don't want to move."

"No, they would not like to move."

"Certain groups dominate public places."

"They would like to have a club for the older set of teenagers."

"Most of them hang on the corners at night."

"Most of the people are friendly, and a lot of the people are greenhorns."

The reporting on the Camp neighborhood indicated that the area and the people were viewed by the youth as being quite average. By this, they meant that, for the most part, Camp people were hard-working, respectable, and that the Camp neighborhood was adequate in terms of housing and general cleanliness. The youth, for the most part, were content to stay there. But the Camp youth, too, voiced the common plea for a place where the older youth could go for recreation.

Direct quotes:

"All of the people work."

"Most of the people are clean."

"There was hardly any place to go for the teenagers."

"They hang out on people's stairs and in the streets."

"No place to go."

"The way they can't hang on the corner or sit in front of the house because the police give them a lot of trouble."

According to our youth reports, the Smith neighborhood is a dying area peopled by jerks,

flunkies, and some few average working people. The dominant feelings were that a dullness pervades the general atmosphere of Smith and nothing will dispel it. There is nothing to do, no place to go, and few persons worth knowing. The youth hang on corners and are constantly harassed by the police. The vast majority wanted to move out as soon as possible.

Direct quotes:

"The people are low class."

"Nothing to do."

"No place for teenagers."

"They all want to move; they hate Providence a lot."

"There is nothing to do so they like to hang in crowds."

"Most of the kids hang on the corners and they all want to join the service when they get out of school."

II. SCHOOL There was a certain commonality that ran through the reporting for all the sectional teams on the category - School. The youth, for the most part, felt that school was something to be tolerated in order that they might obtain better jobs. In South Providence, this toleration was harder to come by and, consequently, it was there that the largest number of responding youth had dropped out. It was here, too, that a resentment for

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what seemed the unreasonable demands of unsympathetic school authorities was intensified.

It was difficult to find any real consistency in subject preference other than a correlation between functioning level and academic subjects; i.e., the higher functioning level, the more frequently academic subjects are preferred.

Athletics was generally the favored activity both as participants and spectators. This preference was particularly noticeable in South Providence. There was some slight interest in school clubs; e.g., drama, but this type of interest was almost nil in South Providence.

All responding youth were in full accord as to the teacher being the key to all aspects of school. They wanted a teacher who taught and didn't "con" them along. But they felt this could be done in a humane and meaningful way. They didn't mind working; in fact, they expected to work, but they wanted understanding and help over the rough spots. The prevalent feelings were that there weren't enough of these teachers.

South Providence youth, in particular, wanted the teachers to look at them as individuals; in essence, to show by their approach that

each pupil was an important person that could do many things and to follow this with the kind of action that would help these youth to accomplish these things. They felt that their involvement would be in direct ratio to the teacher expectation and support.

There were many reasons given for dropping out: to get a job, to look for a job, to help at home, school was a prison.... But in the last analysis, the responses indicated that dropping out was directly related to lack of success in school and the reasons were rationalizations.

Direct quotes:

South Providence

"Kids dropped out because their subjects were too hard and they got disgusted."

"Pretty good teachers take an interest in their students."

"The kind of teachers they liked was a strict teacher who made you work."

"Left school because subjects were too hard to keep up with."

"Bad teachers take off right away and don't help with your problems."

"Most of them said they liked the teachers that were pretty hard on you but are fun once in a while."

"Others thought of school as a jail."

"Then they try to talk to the teacher if the teacher talks to them freely -- really talks to them -- not this all school subjects -- then they can get along."

"Dropped out because they were just fed up."

"The villain was the teacher who was easy, lets you get away with anything, and passes you while you know nothing.

Elmwood-West End

"Dedicated teachers were the good teachers."

"Anybody who needed help, he would stay after class with him."

"Didn't like teachers who let them get away with things."

"A good teacher does his work and once in a while smiles at the kids."

"A bad teacher is an easy teacher."

"Some believed a teacher who works with students that couldn't catch on quick was a good teacher."

"Someone who doesn't always let you slide when you do something."

Federal Hill - Olneyville

"The teachers that are pretty bad are the ones who don't give any individual attention."

"A good teacher will understand you."

"Good teachers will sit down and talk to you when you have trouble."

"The teachers they thought were pretty bad were the soft teachers."

Fox Point - Camp - Smith

"Some drop out because they are dumb."

"The good teacher is one who likes to help the student."

"They like the teacher you can talk to."

"They dislike clubs that are run by one type of people."

"Most of the kids liked teachers who they could trust and who would help them out when they need help."

III. JOBS

There was a general realization in all neighborhoods that the length of schooling was positively related to the level of the job. This was carried to the extent where there was a very prevalent notion that a high school diploma, whatever its worth, was the magic key to occupational success. In most cases, the youth who aspired highest had a realistic understanding of what was necessary by way of preparation in school, training, etc. It was at the lower end of the aspiration continuum where there was a common lack of real understanding as to the relation of preparation and job.

The South Providence youth were at the lowest end of the job aspiration level. They would be content, for the most part, with jobs that offered some security, a fair wage, and work that wasn't too hard for them to handle; e.g., carpentry or factory

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work. They were not too sure how to get these jobs, but felt it was a matter of luck. Elmwood and West End youth's reporting indicated a somewhat similar picture. In the Camp and Fox Point areas, more consideration was given to post high school training with sights set on occupations like technician, nursing, and teaching. The majority of youth in the Smith area seemed to feel that the armed services and/or marriage would solve their occupational problems. Olneyville, and particularly Federal Hill, youth covered a wider range of occupational goals. These youth were many times considering college and eventual careers in most of the professions.

The vast majority of youth in all neighborhoods felt strongly that to get the good job one must have connections. This was especially true in Federal Hill. In South Providence, there was a heavy undercurrent of "yes, connections are important but we don't have any."

There was very little in the reporting of any of the youth that gave indication of an interest in occupational areas for the purpose of service to humanity. Surprisingly enough, but perhaps not so surprising, the few times such service was mentioned it was in the South Providence area.

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The reporting from all neighborhoods presented a frightening picture on the degree of fatalism our Providence youth have as to the possibilities of decent employment here. The vast majority indicated that, if the opportunity presented itself, they would seek greener employment pastures in other sections of the state or nation.

The knowledge of the youth about agencies and/or individuals that might be of assistance in obtaining and maintaining employment followed the same underlying pattern; i.e., the youth getting along in school and aiming for realistic goals had the best understanding of such agencies. The irony here is that these youth were the least likely to need such services.

The understanding, appreciation, and reliance on counselors followed the same sobering pattern. The troubled and/or troublesome youth, as epitomized in South Providence, felt a need for the services of the school counselor but were kept from going to him by feelings of shame, inadequacy, and resentment. The prevalent feeling here was that the counselor had too many "kids" to work with and so he put his time in with the "smart" ones. Here, too, there was an underlying wish for the counselor to make it easy by first coming to the youth for they had many

problems they needed help with. And again it was the youth with relatively minor problems; e.g., data on different types of colleges, ... who felt they were adequately served by the counselors.

Direct Quotes:

South Providence

"They all had counselors in school, but the kids were reluctant to go to them."

"Ones that did want jobs wanted easy jobs."

"Everybody I talked to said there is nothing in Providence."

"Some of them are shy and ashamed to come to him (counselor). But he could ask them about it so they could get it all out of their system."

"Most of them try to look for jobs by asking people if they need help and all that."

"The good students in school will go see the counselor. but the others will wait for the counselor to come see them."

"People in this section think college is an impossible thing."

"Everyone had a counselor, but they didn't know that they did more than check up on you when failing or your citizenship was bad."

Elmwood

"Most of the kids have a counselor in school, but that is the end of it."

"They didn't see enough of the one they had."

"The only jobs they could have gotten were in a jewelry factory."

"One counselor wasn't enough or adequate."

"Most of them were pretty critical of the job opportunities around Providence."

West End

"They like jobs where they don't have to use too much brains."

"They didn't think the counselors were much good because they had too many people to counsel."

"The kids said it isn't what you know but who you know."

"A lot of them said they didn't know their counselors."

"Most of them had counselors but they didn't know what they did for them."

"Said there weren't too many good jobs in Providence."

Olneyville

"Didn't think there were many good jobs in Providence."

"They said that the school counselor was the most important person in school as far as subjects go."

"When I asked what kind of jobs they would like to have, I got answers like secretary, doctor, medical research,"....

"They need pull within the company."

Federal Hill

"Most of the kids go see people that their fathers know that have connections."

"Didn't think there were many good jobs in Providence."

"The counselor helps plan your program."

"Get jobs because friends own the company."

"Looking for a job - go see your father's friends."

"Counselor guides not only in educational but vocational ways."

"They said most guys get jobs because they know somebody with pull."

"No one said there were any good jobs around Providence.

"Most guys get jobs through connections."

Smith

"Most of them go see somebody they know."

"You need a lot of skills and school work, but they didn't know how to go about it."

"They should have more counselors in schools all kids said."

"Most of the kids don't like the jobs around Providence."

Camp

"They usually have someone in the place they want to work."

"Most of them say there aren't any good jobs in Providence."

"They really don't know what kind of jobs they want."

"A lot of pull."

"They know that there aren't any good jobs around Providence.

Fox Point

"They didn't really think Providence has too many good jobs....that is why people are moving."

"Get jobs through connections."

"Counselors were trying to help them get through school."

IV. FAMILY The responses in this area indicated a grave degree of family instability in the South Providence section. Parts of Elmwood, West End, and Smith, while not as serious as South Providence, also presented a somewhat debilitated family structure. The remaining neighborhoods exhibited a certain amount of family instability but nothing approaching the above-mentioned neighborhoods.

In South Providence, the father was reported quite frequently as a non-existent figure in that he wasn't present in the home. In these numerous cases, the mother functioned in the dual role of mother and father with the result that the youth in this section had a very nebulous concept of the proper role of father and/or mother. In many reporting instances where the father was in the home, he wasn't gainfully and consistently employed, and here, too, there was a vagueness to his role in the mind of the responding South Providence youth.

This same pattern was reported in Elmwood and the West End; i.e., in those areas where there was a relatively high concentration of Negroes. It was in these neighborhoods, therefore, that there wasn't much choice of whom to go to when in trouble, financial or otherwise. The overburdened mother found difficulty in answering these needs and, therefore, added another dimension to the already fuzzy concept of mother; i.e., resentment. The reporting indicated that this gave impetus to an attempt to answer these needs by unlawful means. And this is one reason why the youth in these neighborhoods many times gave the probation officer as their source of aid in trouble.

It was in these neighborhoods that the best-liked member of the family was very often the younger sister who represented a non-threatening object of love and protection. What little visiting that was done was usually to the maternal grandmother.

The youth in the remaining neighborhoods described the father as a figure head "boss" in the house with the mother making most of the decisions. This ambivalence was carried further in that the father was, in most cases, cited as the "ranter" while the mother was the one who did most to fix things up. These youth felt that the father

as breadwinner should be the real boss of the family. These youth found it generally impossible to pick the best liked in their family. They visited more often and traveled farther to do so than their South Providence, Elmwood, and West End counterparts.

There was a common undercurrent in the reporting of the youth from all the neighborhoods; i.e., parents were from a different era and didn't truly understand the problems of today's youth.

Direct quotes:

South Providence

"Who is the boss? Most of them said their mother."

"Can't get along with their fathers because they are not their real fathers."

"Don't get along with their fathers because they drink too much or don't work."

"Their mother was the boss, so I guess their fathers don't live with them."

"Some of them are always fighting, either them or their parents."

"Some of them were just living with their mother so the mother was the boss."

"Most of them told me that they have trouble with their family because shortage of money, the old man getting drunk and all that there."

"Seven out of ten I asked today said their mother was the boss of their family."

"Nine out of the fifteen I interviewed today lived with their mothers so she was the boss."

"They don't really get along with their parents because they don't live with them."

"So they have to go out and shoot dice and play cards to make a few dollars."

"They try to stay away from their families because their family has too many problems."

"Others said that family life was terrible and they were trying to get out."

"Most of them would straighten things out themselves and if they couldn't handle it themselves, they would just let the problem ride and pretend it doesn't exist."

Elmwood-West End

"Most of the people said their mother."

"Didn't have any father or he was dead so their mother was boss."

"If trouble - go to their mother or probation officer."

"Most of the time, the parents would yell with no understanding whatsoever."

"I don't believe they fully understand their children."

"A lot of them are old fashioned."

"Mother was the boss in the family because the mother and father are separated."

"It all depends on how things are going or who is living or who is separated."

"Most of them thought the mother."

"Most kids I talked to said they didn't have a father for a parent so the only boss they had was their mother.

"In a lot of cases, their older brother tried to take over where the father had left."

Federal Hill - Olneyville

"They said that their father was the boss in the family."

"Father was the boss, but sometimes the mother acted like it."

"None of them said they liked one parent better than the other."

"It was a man's duty to run the household."

"The majority said the father."

"They could count on either."

Fox Point - Camp - Smith

"Just have nothing in common with their parents."

"Everyone said their father, but I don't think that was too much of a truthful answer."

"Most of the kids said their mother was boss."

"Most of the kids said both of them were equally the boss."

"Most of them said the old man was boss."

"Some of them said the father and some of them said the mother, but I think they more or less really thought the mother."

"The mother gives them the money because sometimes they are on welfare and naturally the check comes to the mother."

V. RECREATION The reporting on recreation had many similar points throughout all the neighborhoods. There was the prevalent feeling that recreation facilities made no real provision for

the older youth. They were constantly annoyed and harassed by the younger "kids" whose presence took much of the enjoyment out of the recreation. These older youth realized that recreation was for all but deeply felt a need for a distinction in provision in order that they might have a time and place where they could mingle and recreate with their peer group. In this type of setting, they wanted a variety of activities which would include athletics, games, dances, and quiet spots where they could just sit and talk in small groups. In essence, they wanted facilities they could identify with as being their own.

There was agreement that the female youth were particularly neglected in that recreation facilities were, for the most part, constituted around the interests and capabilities of male youth.

The types of recreation leaders most desired were those young enough for mutual identification. A part of this identification they felt was direct participation by these leaders in their activities but not to a degree where it would affect overall control of the situation. They wanted these leaders to be experienced in recreation and understanding in their relationships. It would also help, they felt, if these leaders had reputations in athletics.

In those recreation centers where the supervisory personnel took a relatively authoritative approach in areas the youth felt were superfluous to recreation, there was a great deal of resentment. Examples of this were rigid rules relative to dress and appearance. An undue interest in homework or general home conditions was also categorized in this way. The youth felt this was an inopportune intrusion for when they come to recreate, they wanted to recreate. As a result, when faced with this type of approach, the youth tended to shun such a center.

It was generally agreed by all youth that there was a certain element who wouldn't attend any recreation center no matter how attractive it was. It was felt that this type of youth must be reached through other mediums.

Direct quotes:

South Providence

"Most of the kids think there should be a recreation center for kids 16 to 20 years old because the young kids mess up and get into the way of others."

"A recreation for older boys and girls, one so the girls can participate in everything."

"The girls have virtually nothing."

"Most of the recs the girls don't get in at all."

"There isn't enough activity."

"A well-trained person with a nice personality could run it."

"I think they would like someone who could keep them in line. They are sick with all the trouble and want a place that wasn't too strict."

"Most of the boys like to go to Flynn because Jimmy Stone is there and he is a big basketball player and he is someone they can look up to."

"Too many little kids there."

"There is still another group that is happy running around seeing what they can pick up on the side in such areas as stealing and other things of that nature."

"They don't have any interest in the recreation center whether there was one around the corner or not."

Elmwood-West End

"We have a recreation center that is only open in the winter and that is only for junior high kids."

"Too many little kids in the way."

"They just forget about the older kids after they get a certain age."

"They don't know and understand the younger generation."

"There should be something for the older kids."

"In some recreations, they try to run your home and your recreation at the same time.

"When you go to recreation, you are there to have fun and not have them butt into your school affairs and your home problems."

Federal Hill - Olneyville

"Too many little kids go and so no teenagers go."

"They said that there are all little kids at the swimming pools."

"They said that there should be a place for girls to go in the winter."

"Someone could run it who was qualified and young so that he would mix in with the kids."

"There should be something better for the girls."

"They said that if someone had a good personality and mixed in with the kids, they would have more respect for him and they would follow his lead."

"They said all of the activities are for boys."

"No one wants to go because of all the little kids around."

"They should have places where they could play games and have dances for older kids.

"They said they wouldn't go even if they had the best facilities."

Fox Point - Camp - Smith

"Too many little kids."

"Wouldn't have to be with a lot of little kids around."

"Someone who is experienced in recreation and knows all about problems and knows a lot about basketball and games."

"Kids are kind of attracted to him because he is a kind of star and he knows what he is doing and he knows how to train the kids."

VI. TROUBLE

South Providence

In South Providence, the youth reported that kids got into trouble for the following reasons:

hanging around with nothing to do, i.e., not in school and had not jobs

in a gang
brought up wrong
to prove they're bad
to prove to everybody they can make trouble and get away with it
from loneliness
to attract attention
from staying out of school
for excitement

The kinds of trouble were reported as follows:

fights, i.e, individual and gang
breaking and entering
assaults
truancy
drinking
disturbing the peace
shoplifting
purse snatching
trespassing
destroying private property
stealing cars
using narcotics
pre-marital pregnancy

The reporting indicated that when caught, the punishment was usually in direct ratio to the offenses and past record.

This was reported as follows:

warning
probation
training school
children's center
foster home

If they weren't caught, they would continue until they were.

The sources of help when in trouble were reported as being quite limited due to the ofttimes disrupted situation in the home and the lack of any real "connections." In fact, in the area of interviewing relative to connections the interviewers most times weren't even clear as to what connections were.

Direct quotes:

"You see, they hang on corners -- they don't have any jobs and the recreation is going to close."

"Then there is some who are pushing the needle."

"They hang on corners, and it gets very dull."

"They break and enter -- it usually leads up to bigger things and they really get into trouble."

"They are so lonely so they start trouble so as to make friends."

"Then they get drunk and the police take them down to the station."

"There is nothing exciting to do but get into trouble."

"Most of them said the parents didn't care."

"Most of them didn't know what I was talking about." (connections)

Elmwood

Elmwood youth were reported as getting into trouble because of:

disrupted home life, i.e., domestic or financial
no place to go, i.e., recreation, and nothing to do in leisure time
search for some excitement, i.e., boredom
wrong companions
lack of discipline

The kinds of trouble they were reported as getting into were:

breaking and entering
theft
stealing cars
drinking
pre-marital pregnancy

Punishment depended on the record of the individual and the offense.

Most of these youth turned to their family or relatives when in trouble. Few reported any real connections.

Direct quotes:

"Most of the kids get into trouble because of their home life."

"Those who don't have a good home life start walking the streets and end up in trouble."

"If they needed money and couldn't get it at home, they would steal it the best way they knew how."

"The family has a lot to do with it because they don't discipline them enough in little matters."

West End

West End youth reported the reasons for getting into trouble as:

lack of parental care and understanding
lack of anything to do, i.e., recreation
to attract attention
bad companions

The kinds of trouble reported were:

breaking and entering
stealing cars
drinking
purse snatching
fighting
defacing property
assault and battery
narcotics
pre-marital pregnancy

The punishment again depended on the past record and the type of offense. The most frequently reported were:

probation
children's center
training school

Direct quotes

"On this side of town, we need more recreation."

"The real reason is because there isn't anything to do."

"When they get caught, they get sent up unless it is their first offense and they go on probation."

"Stolen cars, breaking and entering, and assault and battery."

"Kids in school are occupied with homework, but a dropout tries to arouse his friends by telling them how good he is having it."

"Dropouts will get in trouble because they try to find a job but they can't, so they are bored and this will lead to trouble."

Olneyville

The Olneyville youth reported that their fellow youth got into trouble for the following reasons:

parental neglect
poor neighborhood
lack of money
nothing to do with free time
wrong companions
easily led
gain attention

The kinds of trouble were reported as follows:

fighting
destroying property
stealing cars
robbing stores

The punishment depended on the record of the individual, the offense, and his connections.

Most of these youth, when in trouble, turned to their family, relatives, and people with connections.

Direct quotes:

"Kids get into trouble because of their upbringing, poor neighborhood facilities, or because they have nothing to do with their free time except to go look for trouble."

"They said that they steal cars, rob stores, break windows, and ruin people's property."

"Get into trouble because their parents don't watch over them and they do what they please."

"They said that the more serious the trouble, the harder the punishment."

"Most of the time, the kids count on their family."

"A lot of them agree that kids get in trouble because they want attention."

Federal Hill

Federal Hill youth were reported as getting into trouble because of:

nothing to do -- no place to go - looking for it
parental neglect
for laughs
for excitement
wrong companions

The kinds of trouble reported were:

stealing, e.g., hub caps, cars, ...
fighting
drinking
disturbing the peace
breaking and entering
destroying property

The punishment was reported as being in direct ratio to the past record, the offense, and the power of the connections.

When in trouble, Federal Hill youth turned for the most part to their family, relatives, and if there were no connections in the family, to those with connections. They reported that connections provided the quickest and easiest way to get out of trouble.

Direct quotes:

"These guys knew people with connections, so they only got away with paying a small fine."

"They said they knew some people with connections."

"Most kids get into trouble by looking for it or by the parents making them get away with anything."

"They got into trouble because they had nothing to do."

"They usually get into fights, steal, drink, or disturb the peace."

"They get in trouble mostly at night time because of hanging on the corners."

"They said the major reason they get into trouble is because there's nothing to do and no place to go."

"This idleness causes trouble."

Fox Point

Fox Point youth were reported as getting into trouble for the following reasons:

nothing to do but hang out on corners
to attract attention
for fun

The kinds of trouble reported were:

drinking
fighting
disturbing the peace
destroying property
glue sniffing
pre-marital pregnancy

The punishment was reported as being dependent on the individual's record and the offense he committed.

When in trouble, these youth turned to their family, relatives, and friends. Very few reported they had any connections, but all youth felt knowing someone in a position of authority would help them.

Direct quotes:

"Most of the people I talked to said they could depend mostly on the parents for help."

"Mostly they get into trouble by drinking."

"Most of the kids get into trouble because they don't have anything to do."

"The reason they drink is because they have nothing to do or they are looking for a good time or something. You know when you are drunk you are seeing everything look good and everybody is pretty."

Smith

The Smith youth reported that youth got into trouble in their section for the following reasons:

parental neglect
poor family life
nothing to do
hanging in gangs

The kinds of trouble reported were:

drinking
destroying property
fighting individuals and gangs
breaking and entering
stealing cars
pre-marital pregnancy
narcotics

The punishment was reported as being directly related to the past record and the offense.

When in trouble, these youth turned to their family, friends, and sometimes to their probation officer. Most reported that if one had connections, everything would be fixed up.

Direct quotes:

"Most of them don't care what they do because their parents don't care."

"There is a lot of drinking around Smith Hill."

"Most kids get into trouble because they don't have nothing to do and they hang in gangs."

"Most of the kids count on their friends."

"Most of the time, most of the kids around our way are on probation so when they get into trouble, they count on their probation officers."

"The kind of trouble they get into is they get pregnant."

"If not their parents, they can't count on no one because most of the kids around my way -- the cops don't like them."

"There is no place for the kids to hang really, some of the places they do hang, like there is this place and the kids let them drink in there and the guys stand out front and with cabinets in there -- it is liquor, and you know, the cops don't stop them because they don't know and they let the girls drink it inside, and most of the time, it is because they are drunk that they get into trouble."

"There is dope in some places you walk in down Smith Hill and you can get the stuff."

"Liquor stores sell liquor to minors."

"The girls drink, and when a girl gets drunk, you can't save her.

Camp

The Camp team reported the following causes of trouble in their neighborhood:

nothing to do -- no place to go
lack of money
lack of discipline at home
for kicks

The kinds of trouble reported were:

stealing cars
breaking and entering
destroying property
pre-marital pregnancy

Punishment was reported as being contingent on the past record of the individual and his offense.

When in trouble, Camp youth turn to their family, relatives, and probation officer. Connections were reported as being very important, but they were not frequently found here.

Direct quotes:

"Most of the kids get into trouble because there is no place to go."

"Can't count on their mothers and fathers too much because you know they are used to them getting into trouble."

"Most of the time, they have a good probation officer."

"They have babies before and everything, and one girl has three kids already and she is nineteen."

"Most of the girls end up going to reform school, but a couple of them end up getting married to guys that you know aren't any good for them."

VII. PROJECT PERSONNEL

From the viewpoint of project director and as a result of direct daily contact with all project personnel, with its concomitants of peer contact, discussions (small, individual, and large groups) the following results were found common to all personnel.

The job aspect of the Project was extremely important to all participating youth. They had time and needed money so a weekly pay check answered a quite basic need. But this was far from the completely pervading influence. They felt there was a dignity and a vital importance to their work and that if each member did his job thoroughly, both the individual and the community would ultimately benefit.

To this end, they worked diligently and well in obtaining information from their peers. In fact, there were very few team members who gave much thought to the time aspect of their work. They, many times, extended their efforts beyond the stipulated time without a murmur of dissent in order to accomplish their tasks as they saw them.

Their motivation was most certainly intensified by the operation of this "Project." Time and time again, they stated for themselves and for their peers that in the past all that had been done for youth was talk. Now they felt something objective, vital, and meaningful was actually underway. Somebody was really interested in youth problems because they could see the proof.

There was an increase in knowledge on the part of all team personnel. This was concretely evidenced by their relatively comprehensive responses to the post "Project" administration of the questionnaire. It was even more evident in the small and large group discussion which each week took on a more analytic and penetrating tone.

This increase in knowledge assumed the following three aspects:

First, there was an increase in pure information relative to community agencies, workers, etc.

Second, there was an increase in the knowledge of the varied youth problems, needs, and attempted solutions in their immediate neighborhood and there was also an increase in the knowledge of the youth needs, problems, and attempted solutions from neighborhoods other than their own.

Third, there was an increase in understanding of why certain youth act the way they do, and, of prime importance, there was an increase in understanding of self.

It is felt that much of this increase in understanding of self was a direct outgrowth of the team discussions, both sectional and general. It was constantly inspiring to see the candor and intensity of the youth as they made a common quest for causes and solutions in these sessions.

South Providence

In South Providence, there were sixteen youth on the "Project" team, i.e., two team leaders, one typist, and thirteen interviewers. Of these sixteen youth, one was a dropout from a senior high special class, two were enrolled in special classes in senior high, eleven were enrolled in high, and two were high school graduates.

The two special class youth were potential dropouts. Six of the eleven enrolled in senior high regular were quite probable dropouts, and the remaining five would quite probably complete high school. One high school graduate was looking for work and the other intended to go to college.

The dropout is now considering a return to school and we will attempt to set up a special program for him.

The two special class youth have returned to school.

The eleven senior high enrollees have all returned to school.

One high school graduate is attempting to find a way to go to college, and the other graduate, who intended to go to college but got into trouble during the summer, is now enrolled in college through the help of Youth Progress and the Urban League.

Direct quotes:

"This Project means trying to keep kids off the street and give them something to do."

"I now have something to do and keep a little bit of money in my pocket."

"By asking questions of teenagers in South Providence, I get a personal point of view."

"This job has helped me with many problems, and I appreciate this."

"This project means more than just another job, but a chance to find out more about their feelings compared to other kids."

"It gave me a chance to find out what is really right and wrong with South Providence."

"This Project is a chance to try to help ourselves and other kids our age to a better life."

"This job means not only money, but a chance to learn things I didn't know before."

"It's important to me because it is my first job and I am earning money."

"It gives me responsibility because I know through my work others will benefit."

Elmwood-West End

In Elmwood-West End, there were seventeen youth in the Project, one team leader, one typist, and fifteen interviewers. One of these was a special class dropout, two were enrolled in college, and the other had no notion of his next direction.

The special class dropout didn't finish with the Project as he obtained full-time employment.

The two special class enrollees have all returned to school.

The twelve senior high youth have all returned to school.

The college youth has returned to college, and the other high school graduate has entered college.

Direct quotes:

"This is my first job; please let me keep the job."

"It shows that everyone has a different feeling from others."

"This job has helped me to understand problems confronting people today."

"This Project will mean a great deal to the future generation of teenagers."

"I feel very good after the discussion groups."

"The Youth Progress program demonstrates to me and today's teenagers that an earnest and constant strive is being made to improve our present situation, and by doing this, we are proving to the teenagers of today that someone really does care."

"I was amazed, at times, of my own ignorance of the people and situations surrounding me."

Federal Hill - Olneyville

There were thirteen youth directly involved with the Project in the Federal Hill - Olneyville sections, one team leader, one typist, and eleven interviewers.

Two of these youth were dropouts from regular classes in senior high, one was a dropout from a special class in junior high, seven youth were enrolled in high schools and quite probably would finish, two were intending college, and one was enrolled in college.

The two dropouts from regular classes in senior high are back in school. The special class dropout only worked two days with the Project, because she was really unable to communicate with her peers, and must be considered the Project's only casualty.

The seven high school youth are back in school.

The two youth intending college are presently enrolled in college.

The college youth is back in college.

Direct quotes:

"It kept me in spending money and helped me to understand better the needs of teenagers."

"In one way, it was a job to me because I knew I had to do it and for a purpose, and, in another way, it was beneficial to me because I found out how the kids my age feel about certain things."

"After completing this assignment, I feel I am better prepared to understand the youth of today and my fellow teenagers whose problems seem great and almost insoluble."

"I had not heard of the Board before, and I did not know that so much interest was taken in the youth."

"It seemed to me that people often complained about the rising number of juvenile delinquents in the state, but no action was taken to prevent it."

"It allowed me to realize that there are some people who are greatly influenced by their environment; and if the surroundings can be improved, most likely the character of the individual will be improved too."

"I think this program is excellent for improving the kids for the future, and I am proud working for it."

"I have learned to respect these different personages views on life and to accept them as I do those of the kids who reason the same way I do."

"It has increased my knowledge."

"By participating in it, I was able to get first-hand knowledge of the opinions of my fellow teenagers on timely issues and to learn a little more about my own ideas and motives."

"The survey offered me a closer look into the intricate workings of the so-called mixed-up teenager mind and showed it to be more logical than anticipated."

"It also pointed out the needs of the community to me more closely."

Fox Point - Smith - Camp

There were fifteen youth directly involved with the Project from these sections, one team leader, one typist, and thirteen interviewers.

One of these youth was a senior high school dropout, four were enrolled in high, but were probable dropouts, nine were enrolled in senior high with the probability quite high that they would finish, and one was enrolled in college.

The dropout has returned to school. The thirteen high school youth are all back in school, and the college youth is back in college.

Direct quotes:

"Since working for the youth board, I've learned about many organizations which I never had the slightest idea about in the past."

"I feel that the Providence Youth Progress Board was more than just a job. It helped me get things off my chest I always wanted to."

"I think that this Project has helped me to find out just what the real problems are in their community."

"From working on the Project, I learned that if a person takes time to analyze other people's problems, he can usually find someone who is worse off than he is."

"You can also learn things about a neighborhood, its people, and its activities that you never knew before; even if you lived there all your life."

"To me, it means a job that is helping youth as well as experience for the interviewers."

"It means that the city is taking an interest in youth of Rhode Island."

"It shows that something is going to be done about the time teenagers have on their hands."

"If they are hanging on corners with nothing to do, then these are the ones who need the service the most."

"To me, the Youth Progress Board is more of a Project than a job."

"I was typing out the papers, the interviewers didn't talk too much, but as time went on, they began to open up."

"Now, they are talking more about what troubles them and what they really want out of life."

"The Project is a sign that people are willing to act, not just talk about the problems."

"It has done much for me."

There were two additional youth involved in the project, i.e., a floating typist and the Project secretary. The Project secretary, a high school graduate, had intended to attend business school, but she changed her plans during the Project as a direct result of the Project according to her statements. She now wants to be a teacher and is exploring the possible avenues to this goal. The typist, who during the Project was in the local Children's Center, is now in a foster home and attending high school. Her social worker stated that this girl's otherwise dreary summer came alive through her participation in the Project.

Direct quotes:

"I love the work I did for the Project and I think it gave me a better understanding of life."

"I can never put down what I have learned from this Project."

SUMMARY

It seems evident from this project that youth from the inner city, if directly and actively involved in an operation that has real meaning to them, will produce benefits both for the inner city and themselves. In

Project-Direct Youth Participation, the youth were initially oriented to the work ahead in a way that included them in the planning of the course and also in the clarification of the goals. This was accompanied by an environmental structuring that lent an aura of dignity and importance to their function and there was daily reinforcement of these emphases.

The result of such an approach was an extremely high degree of motivation on the part of all the participating youth. The adult supervision became, for the most part, a non-directive guiding, channeling, and/or harnessing of the driving energy of these youth.

The experiences with the Project seemed to illustrate once again that peers will communicate freely with peers. As the team personnel carried the message of Youth Progress to their neighborhoods and returned to their offices with the responses of their friends, there was little reticence evident in either the content or the method of reporting.

And the experiences with this project also illustrated once again that when an atmosphere of understanding without threat is provided, youth are eager to talk out their innermost and deeply

troubling problems with a candor and intensity that almost insures clarification, awareness, and change. The importance and vitality of this type of participation had a direct ratio to the needs of the youth involved. Just being a part of the inner city was synonymous with relatively pressing needs, but in certain parts of the inner city, particularly South Providence, there was an almost complete engulfment of basic needs, and it was here that such an approach had the most meaning in terms of clarification and awareness but to truly effect change there must, of necessity, be some radical readjustment in environment.

It was observed throughout the Project operation that <u>the youth who needed the support and service of available agencies and/or individuals the most knew the least about the presence and/or function of such agencies or individuals</u>.

In looking through the eyes of our youth, there were many problems that came into clear focus. Some of the outstanding ones are as follows:

<u>Neighborhood</u>

living in slums with all that this connotes

deadening air of neighborhood inertia

feelings of emptiness when neighborhood houses are torn down with nothing but empty remains

crowding

fearfulness of other races moving in

fearful of moving due to loss of friends

School

barriers between middle-class school personnel and inner-city youth

curriculum with no real meaning

inability to keep up academically

lack of real awareness of strengths as well as limitations

lack of clarified interests

Jobs

lack of knowledge as to overall occupational picture with its concomitants of necessary interest and aptitude, education, and training.

lack of knowledge as to the obtaining and maintaining of jobs

despair as to the occupational picture in Providence

Family

instability

lack of discipline

lack of understanding

Recreation

no provision

provision with no real meaning because it wasn't really for the older youth

barriers between middle-class recreational personnel and the youth

Trouble

frustrations with home, school, job, ...

nothing else to do

to obtain some kind or recognition

Miscellaneous

The reporting on the questions as to what is the function of various community workers pointed up the superficiality of the knowledge most of the youth had as to the total role of these workers. It pointed out also that whereas these workers represented a symbol of authority, e.g., the policeman; they became the personification of all the authority that the troubled youth had grown to resent.

The words of these youth do have some kind of authority for they are the ones immediately and deeply involved in the problems they describe.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION

A renewal of the general concepts and techniques of the Direct Youth Participation program is being recommended as part of the total program in Community Organization. Such interviewing conducted during the action program should serve three vital functions:

1. Feedback information provided by interviewing youth participating in other programs.
2. Further exploration into neighborhoods, job aspirations, etc.
3. Continued involvement of youth population, with continued impact upon the interviewers themselves.

This pilot project has generated local enthusiasm on the part of target area residents and anticipation of the total program of Youth Progress; the opinions expressed by both interviewers and interviewees have, in many instances, influenced the planning of individual programs.

PROVIDENCE YOUTH PROGRESS BOARD, INC.

SPECIAL YOUTH PROJECT BUDGET

Budget Provision	$	$13,675.00
Personnel - 6-23-64 to 8-31-64		
Director	2,037.70	
Consultant - 5½ days @ $75 per day	412.50	
Team Leaders -		
5 @ $1.50 per hr/25 hrs/8 weeks	1,500.00	
Stenographers -		
1 (For Director) $1.25 per hr/ 35 hrs/8 weeks	350.00	
4 (For Team Leaders) $1.25 per hr/ 25 hrs/8 weeks	1,000.00	
Interviewers -		
25 @ $1.25 per hr/20 hrs/4 weeks	2,500.00	
25 @ $1.25 per hr/20 hrs/4 weeks	2,500.00	
Interviewer-Steno -		
1 @ $1.25 per hr/20 hrs/4 weeks	200.00	
Interviewers -		
For special assignments, 300 hrs @ $1.25 per hr	375.00	
TOTAL	$ 10,875.20	

SPECIAL YOUTH PROJEC BUDGET

Consumable Supplies -		70.20
Paper, tapes, etc.		
Equipment -		
6 Recorders, 4 @ $200	3170	1,140.00
5 Rental Typewriters	r m mos	5.00
Training -		
25 @ $5.00 per day/1 day		
35 @ $5.00 per day/2 days		350.
35 Lunches @ $1.00 each		35.
25 Lunches @ $1.00 each		25.
Travel Cost of Director -		148.50
Miscellaneous -		301.50
Insurance -		50.00
Employees' Insurance		509.60
TOTAL		$ 2,799.80

Contributions

Office Space -

John Hope Settlement House
Benefit Street Recreation Center
Federal Hill House
Providence School Department

Training -

Providence College